



News Release

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IRS INVITES TAXPAYERS TO APPLY FOR TAXPAYER PANEL

WASHINGTON – The Internal Revenue Service is inviting civic-minded individuals to help improve the nation's tax agency by applying to be members of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel. The panel provides a forum for citizens from each state to make suggestions regarding IRS decision making.

For the first time, the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will have membership from all 50 states. Previously, the panel, formerly called the Citizen Advocacy Panel (CAP), was based in four regional locations with members from 10 states. The Treasury Department, which sponsors the group, recommended expanding the program, which led to today's request for applications.

"It is important to bring real-world experience to government operations," said IRS Commissioner Charles O. Rossotti. "Since 1998, people from diverse occupations have brought their experience and expertise to panel meetings. These people help the IRS improve its operations by providing insight and ideas."

Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP) members will:

- Provide opportunities to listen to citizens and make recommendations to the IRS and Treasury on customer-service issues.
- Identify and prioritize taxpayer issues.
- Report annually to Treasury and the National Taxpayer Advocate.
- Participate in meetings where taxpayers are invited to raise issues about their experiences with the IRS.
- Refer taxpayers who contact the panels to the IRS offices best able to address their issues.

"We look forward to working with taxpayers in improving the customer-service focus of the IRS," said Nina Olson, IRS National Taxpayer Advocate. "Working with taxpayers directly will help us identify issues that may not be on the IRS radar screen. We can also hear their concerns about issues the IRS is already addressing."

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To qualify as a TAP member, applicants must be U.S. citizens and be able to commit about 300 hours during the year to the panel. In addition, they must be current with their tax obligations and pass a background check.

The application is available at www.improveirs.org. You can apply on line or download the form and mail it to:

TAP Recruitment Office
7771 West Oakland Park Blvd.,
Suite 225
Sunrise, FL 33351

If you do not have access to a computer, call 1-866-602-2223 for an application form.

Applications must be received by the TAP Recruitment Office by May 20, 2002.

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